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YOUTH STUDY COMMISSION

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

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TESTIMONY OF

DR. LEO LITZKY, PRINCIPAL, WEST KINNEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL

NEWARK, NEW JERSEY

YOUTH IN THE HAYES PROJECT AREA

MEMBERS OF THE COMMISSION:

I WISH TO STATE AT THE OUTSET THAT THE VIEWS PRESENTED HERE TODAY ARE SOLELY MY OWN AND NOT NECESSARILY THOSE OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION OR OF THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE NEWARK PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

NATURE OF YOUTH IN THE AREA

THE WEST KINNEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, OF WHICH I AM THE PRINCIPAL, IS ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE HAYES PROJECT AND THUS IN THE GEOGRAPHIC HEART OF THE HAYES PROJECT AREA. AT PRESENT THE SCHOOL SERVES 1,617 CHILDREN, MOST OF THEM BETWEEN THE AGES OF 12 AND 16. THIS NUMBER IS SUFFICIENTLY LARGE TO BE CONSIDERED A TYPICAL SAMPLING OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. WHILE A VERY LARGE NUMBER OF THESE PUPILS LIVE IN THE HAYES PROJECT UNDER FAVORABLE LIVING CONDITIONS, THE MAJORITY OF THEM LIVE IN THE SURROUNDING SLUMS, CONSISTING LARGELY OF OLD FRAME DWELLINGS KNOWN AS "COLD-WATER FLATS," WITH KEROSENE OR GAS STOVES PROVIDING THE NECESSARY WARMTH. MANY PUPILS, EVEN WHEN ILL WITH COLDS, PREFER TO COME TO SCHOOL WHERE IT IS WARM AND COMFORTABLE RATHER THAN TO DOCTOR THEMSELVES AT HOME.

HEALTH

WHILE THE GENERAL HEALTH OF MOST OF THE PUPILS IS GOOD, THERE ARE A GREAT MANY WHO SHOW THE EFFECTS OF THEIR POOR HEALTH HABITS AND LIVING CONDITIONS.

BY FAR THE MOST SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEM IS POOR TEETH. FULLY 90% OF THE CHILDREN REQUIRE DENTAL CARE, AND ABOUT 50% OF THEM HAVE SERIOUS DENTAL DEFECTS. POOR NUTRITION IS EVIDENT IN AT LEAST 40% OF THE CHILDREN, AS SEEN BY NUMEROUS CASES OF SKIN CONDITIONS, MOUTH CONDITIONS, AND POOR POSTURE. AT LEAST 30% OF THE CHILDREN REQUIRE EYEGLASSES, BUT IT IS EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO GET MANY OF THEM TO WEAR GLASSES. ASTHMATIC CONDITIONS ARE RATHER FREQUENT AMONG THE CHILDREN IN THIS GROUP. AT PRESENT AT WEST KINNEY, WE HAVE ABOUT 30 KNOWN CASES, OF WHICH 8 ARE UNDER TREATMENT. WE ALSO HAVE ABOUT 10 EPILEPTICS AND 6 CASES OF ARRESTED T.B.

LEST ONE GET THE IMPRESSION THAT THESE CHILDREN ARE FALLING APART, IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THEY DON'T SEEM TO HAVE MORE THAN THE USUAL NUMBER OF COLDS; AND IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION CLASSES, MOST OF THEM DEMONSTRATE GOOD PHYSICAL STAMINA. BOTH BOYS AND GIRLS LIKE ATHLETICS AND PARTICIPATE WHEN THEY CAN.

ONE SERIOUS HEALTH PROBLEM RELATES TO HEALTH HABITS. IN SPITE OF A CURRICULUM WHICH EMPHASIZES HEALTHFUL LIVING, THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY CHILDREN WHO ARE UNCLEAN ABOUT THEMSELVES AND THEIR

ENVIRONMENT, WHO EAT CANDY EVERY MORNING, WHOSE IDEA OF A GOOD MEAL IS HOT DOGS AND SODA POP, WHO DON'T BATHE REGULARLY, WHO SMOKE EXCESSIVELY, AND WHO STAY UP LATE EACH NIGHT WATCHING TV. THERE ARE EVEN A FEW WHO DRINK WINE OR BEER AT HOME OR ON THE OUTSIDE.

SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS

ABOUT 45% OF OUR PUPILS COME FROM BROKEN HOMES, I.E., WHERE AT LEAST ONE PARENT IS MISSING. AT THE SAME TIME, AT LEAST 40% OF ALL MOTHERS OF PUPILS ARE EMPLOYED. A MINIMUM OF 6% OF OUR PUPILS RECEIVE HELP FROM THE STATE CHILD WELFARE DEPARTMENT OR THE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WELFARE. WHAT THESE FACTS MEAN IN LACK OF SUPERVISION AND IN SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC INSECURITY IS EVIDENT BY THE LARGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN WHO GET INTO TROUBLE WITH THE SCHOOL OR THE POLICE.

THIS DOES NOT MEAN THAT THE LARGE MAJORITY OF PUPILS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD ARE NOT LAW-ABIDING AND WELL BEHAVED. THEY ARE, IN SPITE OF THE DIFFICULT CONDITIONS UNDER WHICH MANY OF THEM LIVE. THE SMALL PERCENTAGE WHO GET INTO DIFFICULTIES, HOWEVER, REPRESENTS A LARGE NUMBER BECAUSE OF THE HEAVY POPULATION PRESSURE IN THE AREA. THERE ARE 6000 PEOPLE IN THE HAYES HOMES ALONE. IN THE FIVE BLOCK RADIUS OF THE HAYES PROJECT THERE ARE APPROXIMATELY 10,000 OF SCHOOL AGE. IF ONLY 2% GET INTO TROUBLE WITH THE SCHOOL OR THE LAW, THIS REPRESENTS 200 CHILDREN. THIS NUMBER OF DELINQUENTS OR NEAR-DELINQUENTS CAN GIVE A POOR REPUTATION TO ANY NEIGHBORHOOD.

THE BULK OF THE YOUNG PEOPLE OF THIS AREA ARE VERY MUCH LIKE YOUNG AMERICANS ANYWHERE. THEY HAVE THE SAME NEEDS AS CHILDREN EVERYWHERE FOR ACCEPTANCE BY THEIR PEERS; FOR INDEPENDENCE OF THE FAMILY; FOR EXPERIENCES IN TESTING LIMITS SET BY THE AUTHORITY OF THE HOME, SCHOOL, AND COMMUNITY; AND FOR SUITABLE OUTLETS FOR THEIR STRONG HETEROSEXUAL FEELINGS.

MOREOVER, WITH THOSE CHILDREN WHO HAVE A WEAK FAMILY LIFE AND LESS FAMILY SECURITY, IDENTIFICATION WITH THEIR PEERS IS GENERALLY STRONGER THAN USUAL. THE TESTING OF LIMITS MAY RESULT IN OVERT HOSTILITY AND EVEN REBELLION. PEER GROUP VALUES MAY BECOME ANTI-SOCIAL. REBELLION MAY TAKE THE FORM OF HETEROSEXUAL SATISFACTION WHICH IS IN CONFLICT WITH MIDDLE-CLASS MORES. WHEN, TO THE INSECURITY OF THESE YOUNG PEOPLE ARE ADDED THEIR RECOGNITION OF RACIAL PREJUDICE, THE ECONOMIC DISPARITY OF THEIR OWN LOT AS COMPARED WITH OTHERS, THE LACK OF SUCCESS IN SCHOOL FROM WHATEVER CAUSE, THEN THE HOSTILITY, AGGRESSION, AND EVEN HATE ENGENDERED IN ANY OF THESE CHILDREN ARE LIKELY TO CULMINATE IN DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR. THAT WE HAVE MANY CHILDREN ON WHOM UNFAVORABLE SOCIAL FACTORS IMPINGE HEAVILY IS QUITE CLEAR. THE MARVEL IS THAT WE HAVE SO LITTLE DELINQUENCY, NOT THAT WE HAVE SO MUCH.

IN GENERAL, THERE ARE MANY CHILDREN IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD WHO ARE OVER-AGGRESSIVE, HOSTILE, HIGHLY EXTROVERTED, UNCOOPERATIVE, DESTRUCTIVE, DISRESPECTFUL OF PRIVATE PROPERTY, REGENTFUL, SUSPICIOUS, IMPULSIVE, AND STUBBORN. LARGE NUMBERS FEEL UNRECOGNIZED AND UNAPPRECIATED. MANY HAVE EXPERIENCED FAILURE IN SCHOOL AND ARE EITHER RETARDED IN GRADE OR IN KNOWLEDGE, ESPECIALLY IN READING AND IN

ARITHMETIC. FAILURE TO SOME HAS BECOME AN ACCEPTABLE REACTION TO SCHOOL SO THAT THERE IS NO SELF-CRITICISM ATTACHED TO FAILURE. SELF-DELUSION AND FANTASY ARE COMMON CHARACTERISTICS OF THE THINKING OF MANY OF THESE CHILDREN. THEY SEEM TO SHUN REALITY FOR FEAR OF WHAT THE FUTURE MAY BRING, AND THEY TEND TO LIVE IN THE IMMEDIATE PRESENT.

I MUST REITERATE THAT THESE COMMENTS DO NOT CHARACTERIZE ALL YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE AREA. THERE ARE MANY WHO CAN BE CONSIDERED IDEAL CHILDREN AND STUDENTS, WHO ACCEPT THE VALUES OF SCHOOL AND SOCIETY, AND WHO ARE BUILDING FINE FUTURES FOR THEMSELVES. THE LESS FAVORABLE CHARACTERISTICS MENTIONED, HOWEVER, OCCUR IN COMBINATION IN MANY CHILDREN WITH SUCH INTENSITY THAT THEY CAN BE CONSIDERED SIGNS OF PRE-DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR. UNLESS SOMETHING IS DONE FOR THESE CHILDREN, MANY WILL BECOME DELINQUENT.

IN MY OPINION, MUCH IS ALREADY BEING DONE. IN FACT, I BELIEVE THAT THE TREND TOWARD DELINQUENCY IN THIS COMMUNITY HAS REVERSED ITSELF. IN 1956, WHEN I BECAME PRINCIPAL OF CLEVELAND JR. HIGH SCHOOL, LOCATED ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE HAYES PROJECT, THERE WERE CONSIDERABLE GANG ACTIVITY AND NUMEROUS ACTS OF VIOLENCE AMONG NEIGHBORHOOD YOUTH. NOW THREE YEARS LATER, THE GANG ACTIVITY AS WELL AS THE VIOLENCE HAS DIMINISHED CONSIDERABLY. SOME REASONS FOR THIS TREND ARE PROBABLY THE STABILITY WHICH THE HAYES PROJECT HAS PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY AS THE TURN-OVER RATE OF TENANCIES HAS BEEN REDUCED, THE PRIDE OF PARENTS IN THEIR SURROUNDINGS AND THEIR ATTEMPT TO SET NEW STANDARDS OF LIVING FOR THEIR CHILDREN, THE IMPROVEMENT OF TECHNIQUES IN SCHOOLS FOR HANDLING AND TEACHING DIFFICULT CHILDREN, THE WORK OF THE ESSEX COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT AND THE YOUTH AID BUREAU OF THE NEWARK POLICE DEPARTMENT, AND THE ACTIVITIES OF THE SOCIAL AND RECREATION AGENCIES IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, SUCH AS THE FULD NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, THE MORTON STREET BOYS CLUB, THE FRIENDLY NEIGHBORHOOD HOUSE, THE URBAN LEAGUE, THE Y's, AND THE SCHOOL RECREATION CENTERS.

UNMET NEEDS

EDUCATORS IN NEWARK HAVE MADE A VALIANT EFFORT TO MEET THE NEEDS OF YOUNG PEOPLE IN THE CITY GENERALLY AND IN THE HAYES PROJECT AREA PARTICULARLY. NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE MANY NEEDS WHICH HAVE NOT BEEN FULLY SATISFIED. I SHALL MENTION A FEW OF THE MORE IMPORTANT ONES:

1. IMPROVING CHILDREN'S ABILITY TO READ

THE HIGH INCIDENCE OF POOR READING ABILITY AMONG DELINQUENTS HAS LENT CREDENCE TO THE VIEW THAT THE FEELING OF FAILURE AND FRUSTRATION WHICH ACCOMPANY INABILITY TO READ REINFORCES THE AGGRESSIVE AND HOSTILE PERSONALITY. CONVERSELY, MANY EDUCATORS BELIEVE THAT UNBLOCKING THE INABILITY TO READ WITH ITS ATTENDANT FEELINGS OF SUCCESS PROVIDES A CHANNEL FOR REACHING AND WORKING WITH THE POTENTIAL DELINQUENT.

2. AFTER-SCHOOL JOBS

THE ECONOMIC PRESSURES IN THIS COMMUNITY ARE SUCH THAT MANY CHILDREN DO NOT HAVE REGULAR ALLOWANCES OR EVEN LUNCH MONEY. AN AFTER-SCHOOL JOB WOULD ENABLE MANY A YOUNGSTER TO SATISFY SOME OF HIS ECONOMIC NEEDS, THE LACK OF WHICH PROMOTES HOSTILITY AND FRUSTRATION.

THERE ARE MANY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL VALUES, BESIDES THE ECONOMIC ONES, TO AN AFTER-SCHOOL JOB. THESE INCLUDE DEVELOPING SELF-CONFIDENCE, LEARNING THE VALUE OF MONEY, SECURING STATUS, ACQUIRING A RESPECT FOR PROPERTY OF OTHERS, AND DEVELOPING ACCEPTABLE METHODS FOR SECURING WANTS.

3. OPPORTUNITY FOR WHOLESOME BOY-GIRL RECREATION

WHILE MOST OF THE COMMUNITY CENTERS PROVIDE FRIDAY NIGHT DANCES FOR THE TEEN GIRLS AND BOYS, THE DEMAND FAR EXCEEDS THE FACILITIES. THE VALUE OF PROVIDING NORMAL, HEALTHY SOCIALIZING OPPORTUNITIES FOR BOYS AND GIRLS UNDER SUPERVISION CAN HARDLY BE OVER-ESTIMATED. ONE OF OUR PRACTICING PSYCHIATRISTS CLAIMS THAT MORE OPPORTUNITIES OF THIS TYPE WOULD HELP REDUCE THE APPARENT PERSONAL CONFLICT BETWEEN TEEN-AGE GIRLS AND THEIR MOTHERS WHICH IS SO PREVALENT IN THIS NEIGHBORHOOD.

4. PSYCHIATRIC FACILITIES

MUCH HAS BEEN WRITTEN IN RECENT YEARS ABOUT THE NEED FOR EARLY IDENTIFICATION OF CHILDREN WITH EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS. A CHECK OF THE CUMULATIVE FOLDERS IN ANY NEWARK SCHOOL WILL INDICATE MANY CHILDREN WHO WERE IDENTIFIED EARLY AS EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS AND EVEN SOME WHO WERE DESIGNATED AS PRE-PSYCHOTIC. THE BAD FACT IS THAT, IN TOO MANY CASES, THE OVERT BEHAVIOR WAS NOT SERIOUS ENOUGH TO CAUSE THE CHILD TO BE SENT FOR TREATMENT SINCE THERE WERE OTHER MORE PRESSING CASES. THE CURRENT PROPOSAL FOR A NEWARK-IRVINGTON YOUTH CLINIC, IF ADOPTED, WOULD PROVIDE A WELCOME ADDITION TO EXISTING LOCAL FACILITIES. IF OUR PRESENT MEAGER FACILITIES WERE DOUBLED, THEY WOULD STILL BE INADEQUATE TO HANDLE ALL THE CASES WHICH CRY FOR HELP.

TO ILLUSTRATE: AFTER PSYCHIATRIC DIAGNOSIS, A CHILD WILL BE SENT BACK TO SCHOOL WITH THE PROviso, "TO BE RETURNED TO SCHOOL AND TREATMENT INSTITUTED." IN MANY CASES THE TREATMENT STARTS A YEAR LATER OR NOT AT ALL BECAUSE OF THE SHORTAGE OF FACILITIES.

5. A SCHOOL PROGRAM WITH HOLDING POWER

ONE OF THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEMS IN SCHOOLS TODAY

IS THAT OF DROP-OUTS, YOUNG PEOPLE WHO LEAVE WITHOUT COMPLETING THEIR EDUCATION. THE SERIOUSNESS LIES CHIEFLY IN THE FACT THAT THE DROP-OUT GENERALLY REMAINS AS UNADJUSTED TO THE WORLD OF WORK AS HE WAS TO THE WORLD OF THE SCHOOL. VERY FEW DROP-OUTS SECURE JOBS, AND MANY OF THOSE WHO DO FIND JOBS TEND TO HOLD THEM FOR ONLY A SHORT TIME AND THEN MOVE ON TO ANOTHER. IT IS FREQUENTLY THIS IDLE TEENAGER WHO, UNABLE TO SATISFY HIS MATERIAL NEEDS BY NORMAL WORK, FINDS HIMSELF DRAWN INTO A PATTERN OF DELINQUENCY AND CRIME. THE ANSWER SEEMS TO BE THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PROGRAM WHICH WILL KEEP THESE YOUNG PEOPLE INTERESTED IN LEARNING AND ENABLE THEM TO ACHIEVE SOME SCHOOL SUCCESS RATHER THAN A REDUCTION OF THE SCHOOL LEAVING AGE AS SUGGESTED IN SOME QUARTERS.

WHAT THE SCHOOLS ARE DOING

ONE EFFECT OF THE RECENT FUROR OVER ACADEMIC LEARNING, SPARKED BY POPULAR REACTION TO SPUTNIK, HAS BEEN A DE-EMPHASIS BY EDUCATIONAL THEORISTS OF THE PERSONAL NEEDS OF CHILDREN AND A CONCENTRATION ON ACADEMIC GOALS. IN HIS RECENT REPORT ON THE AMERICAN HIGH SCHOOLS, DR. CONANT HAS ATTEMPTED TO MAINTAIN A BALANCE THROUGH EMPHASIS ON GUIDANCE AS WELL AS ON ACADEMIC STANDARDS. THIS BALANCE MAY BE FOUND IN THE NEWARK SCHOOL SYSTEM, WHICH, FOR A LONG TIME, HAS MAINTAINED EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP IN ATTEMPTING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF THE WHOLE CHILD OF EVERY TYPE AND ABILITY.

I WOULD LIKE TO MENTION BRIEFLY SOME ACTIVITIES THROUGH WHICH THE SCHOOLS ARE ATTEMPTING TO MEET THE NEEDS OF OUR YOUTH IN THE HAVES PROJECT AREA.

1. AN INTENSIVE READING PROGRAM ON NEARLY EVERY LEVEL OF INSTRUCTION,--ELEMENTARY, JUNIOR HIGH, AND EVEN SENIOR HIGH. THE EIGHTEENTH AVENUE SCHOOL EXPERIMENT IN READING, BASED ON A VISUAL-AID TECHNIQUE, HAS PRODUCED THE REMARKABLE RESULT OF BRINGING EVERY CHILD INVOLVED IN THE PROGRAM UP TO GRADE LEVEL. AT WEST KINNEY JUNIOR HIGH, AN EXPERIMENT IN DEVELOPMENTAL READING HAS UNBLOCKED CHILDREN SO THAT SOME WHO WERE COMPLETELY NON-READERS ARE NOW READING AND OTHERS HAVE SHOWN GAINS OF TWO AND THREE YEARS IN JUST A FEW MONTHS. AN INTERESTING FACT HERE IS THAT, AS PUPILS WITH DISCIPLINE PROBLEMS LEARNED TO READ, THEY BECAME LESS TROUBLESOME.

THE CHIEF METHOD USED IN THE WEST KINNEY READING PROGRAM MAY BE OF INTEREST TO YOU. NEARLY EVERY CHILD WHO CANNOT READ WANTS TO LEARN. IF, HOWEVER, HE IS AN OLDER CHILD, HE HAS USUALLY BUILT UP AN ATTITUDE OF DEFEATISM AND SHAME ABOUT HIS READING LACK. HE THEREFORE NEEDS DESPERATELY A WARM AND ACCEPTING ATMOSPHERE WITH A SYMPATHETIC TEACHER IN A SMALL CLASS WHERE HE CAN SECURE ATTENTION AND HELP

AS NEEDED. THIS ATMOSPHERE IS PROVIDED. BEGINNING ON A LOW LEVEL, PERHAPS EVEN SECOND GRADE, BUT WITH MATERIALS OF AN INTEREST LEVEL SUITED TO HIS AGE, A CHILD OF TWELVE OR THIRTEEN SOON GAINS SUFFICIENT CONFIDENCE BY HIS SUCCESS TO MOVE RAPIDLY UP THE READING LADDER. A GRADED PROGRAM WITH A PROGRESS CHART FOR EACH PUPIL, SO THAT HE CAN RECORD AND SEE HIS IMPROVEMENT DAILY; PROVIDES SOME OF THE MOTIVATION TO HELP THE NON-READER OR THE RETARDED READER UNLEASH HIS READING POWER. AT WEST KINNEY WE ARE NOW MAKING PLANS TO BROADEN THIS PROGRAM TO INCLUDE EVERY PUPIL WHO NEEDS IT. WEST SIDE AND SOUTH SIDE HIGH SCHOOLS, WHICH RECEIVE MANY CHILDREN FROM THE HAYES PROJECT AREA, ALSO HAVE DEVELOPMENTAL READING PROGRAMS IN PROGRESS. ONE OF THE RICHEST SOURCES OF READING MOTIVATION AND STIMULATION ARE THE FINE SCHOOL LIBRARIES. HERE CHILDREN MAY FIND STORIES OF ADVENTURE, BIOGRAPHIES OF DASHING HEROES, EXCITING HISTORICAL NOVELS - ALL HIGH INTEREST MATERIALS WRITTEN IN SIMPLIFIED VOCABULARY - WHICH ENCOURAGE A ZEAL FOR READING AND PROMOTE RAPID PROGRESS.

A NOVEL IDEA, SUGGESTED LAST WEEK IN A RESOLUTION ADOPTED BY THE NEW JERSEY STATE FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, PROPOSES THAT A CHILD WITH A READING DEFICIENCY OF THREE YEARS BE CLASSIFIED AS HANDICAPPED; THAT THE STATE PROVIDE FOR THESE RETARDED READERS THE SAME FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IT PROVIDES FOR THE BLIND, THE PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED, AND THE MENTALLY RETARDED. ON THE BASIS OF THE WEST KINNEY EXPERIMENT IN READING IMPROVEMENT, I WOULD PREDICT STARTLING RESULTS FROM A CONCERTED PROGRAM SUPPORTED BY STATE FUNDS.

2. AN ORDERLY CLIMATE WHICH PROMOTES LEARNING

AT WEST KINNEY THE STAFF HAS ESTABLISHED A SET OF STANDARDS WHICH IT ENFORCES FIRMLY BUT FAIRLY; AMONG THESE ARE PARTICULARLY FIRM REGULATIONS REGARDING VIOLENT BEHAVIOR. THE RESULT HAS BEEN A GENERAL IMPROVEMENT IN BEHAVIOR FROM TERM TO TERM. ONE OF OUR MOST SUCCESSFUL DEVICES HAS BEEN THE "BEHAVIOR ROOM," WHERE TEACHERS MAY SEND DISORDERLY PUPILS SO THAT TEACHING MAY PROCEED WITH THOSE WHO WISH TO LEARN. IN THE "BEHAVIOR ROOM" PUPILS ARE GIVEN GUIDANCE IN GAINING INSIGHT INTO THE CAUSES OF THEIR MISBEHAVIOR, WHERE NECESSARY, PENALTIES ARE METED OUT.

3. PROCEDURES FOR ORIENTING NEW PUPILS

TO PROMOTE THE ADJUSTMENT OF NEW PUPILS TO THEIR NEW ENVIRONMENT, SEVERAL PROCEDURES HAVE BEEN INSTITUTED: VISITATION TO THE SCHOOL PRIOR TO ENROLLMENT; COMPULSORY VISITATION BY A PARENT BEFORE THE CHILD IS

ENROLLED; LECTURES BY GUIDANCE COUNSELOR AND PRINCIPAL; CLASSROOM STUDY OF SCHOOL RULES, FLOOR PLANS, CLUB OPPORTUNITIES. THIS ORIENTATION IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT FOR PUPILS WHO COME FROM SCHOOLS WITH SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOMS. THE CHANGING OF CLASSES, MOVEMENT IN THE HALLS, AND INDIVIDUAL FREEDOM FRIGHTEN AND OVERWHELM MANY OF THE LESS AGGRESSIVE CHILDREN.

4. EXPERIMENTATION AND INNOVATIONS

SCHOOLS HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO EXPERIMENT WITH NUMEROUS PROCEDURES AND PROGRAMS WHICH ARE MORE LIKELY TO REACH PUPILS WHO ARE DISINTERESTED. THESE INCLUDE ABILITY GROUPING; THE SELF-CONTAINED CLASSROOM; CORE PROGRAMS; DOUBLE AND TRIPLE PERIODS WITH THE SAME TEACHER; HOMEROOM GUIDANCE PROGRAMS; SPECIAL CLASSES FOR BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS; CLASSES AND UNITS IN ORIENTATION, VOCATIONS, AND PERSONAL ADJUSTMENT.

5. BROAD PROGRAM IN ART, MUSIC, SCIENCE, AND THE PRACTICAL ARTS. THESE ARE ALL SPECIAL INTEREST AREAS WHICH FREQUENTLY ENABLE A TEACHER TO INFLUENCE A CHILD WHO FINDS DIFFICULTY IN VERBAL COMMUNICATION. AT WEST KINNEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS PROVIDED RICH FACILITIES, INCLUDING FOUR SHOPS, THREE HOME-LIVING AREAS, FOUR SPECIAL MUSIC AREAS, FOUR WELL EQUIPPED ART ROOMS, AND FOUR SUPERBLY EQUIPPED SCIENCE ROOMS.

6. SCHOOL SOCIAL WORKER AND PSYCHOLOGIST

THROUGH THESE PROFESSIONAL WORKERS, THE SCHOOL IS ABLE TO IDENTIFY MORE QUICKLY THOSE CHILDREN WHO NEED SPECIAL HELP AND TO MAP OUT A PROGRAM WHICH ENLISTS THE AID OF THE FAMILY UNDER PROFESSIONAL SUPERVISION.

7. GUIDANCE

ALL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NEWARK HAVE GUIDANCE FACILITIES. WEST KINNEY HAS A COMPLETE GUIDANCE STAFF AND A FIVE-ROOM GUIDANCE SUITE. THE CUMULATIVE RECORD SYSTEM PROVIDES A SOURCE OF VALUABLE INFORMATION ON EVERY CHILD FOR USE IN PERSONAL, EDUCATIONAL, AND VOCATIONAL GUIDANCE. THE GUIDANCE STAFF INTERVIEWS PUPILS ON A REGULAR AND EMERGENCY BASIS TO HELP THEM WITH THEIR PROBLEMS AND TO REFER THEM TO OUTSIDE AGENCIES IF NECESSARY. THROUGH AN INTENSIVE TESTING PROGRAM THE STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, AND NEEDS OF PUPILS ARE IDENTIFIED AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HELP ARE FORMULATED.

8. RECREATION

THERE ARE 9 RECREATION CENTERS WITHIN A SHORT

WALKING DISTANCE OF HAYES PROJECT, WITH AN INITIAL REGISTRATION THIS FALL OF NEARLY 10,000 CHILDREN. THIS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE ADULTS WHO USE THESE CENTERS, ESTIMATED AT 2,000 MORE. IN ADDITION TO PROVIDING A COMPLETE RECREATION PROGRAM FOR EVERY AGE GROUP IN THESE CENTERS, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS BEEN COGNIZANT OF THE NEED FOR MORE AND MORE PLAY SPACE. THUS, OVER TWO ACRES OF PLAYGROUND WERE INCLUDED IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE NEW WEST KINNEY JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL.

9. PARENT-TEACHER ASSOCIATIONS

A FAIRLY STRONG PTA MOVEMENT EXISTS IN THE SCHOOLS OF THE HAYES PROJECT AREA. WHILE STUDY GROUPS GENERALLY PROVIDE WORTHWHILE PROGRAMS, IT IS STILL DIFFICULT TO SECURE GOOD ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS EXCEPT FOR OPEN HOUSE NIGHTS. MORE MUST BE DONE TO DEVELOP THE LEADERSHIP ABILITY AND INTEREST OF PARENTS.

10. SPECIAL SERVICES

THE DEPARTMENT OF SPECIAL SERVICES OF THE BOARD OF EDUCATION PROVIDES A HOST OF VALUABLE FUNCTIONS FOR THE BENEFIT OF THE PUPILS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THESE INCLUDE PSYCHIATRIC EXAMINATION; ATTENDANCE CHECK-UP; CHILD GUIDANCE SERVICES; ISSUANCE OF WORKING PAPERS; HEALTH SERVICES AND CLINICS; SPECIAL SCHOOL PLACEMENT SERVICES; CLASSES FOR THE DEAF; BLIND, AND OTHER PHYSICALLY HANDICAPPED; SPECIAL CLASSES FOR THE RETARDED; AND SPECIAL PRE-VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS FOR GIRLS AND BOYS. THE ACTIVITIES OF THIS DEPARTMENT ARE SO EXTENDED THAT IT IS DIFFICULT TO APPROXIMATE THE GREAT EXTENT OF ITS INFLUENCE ON YOUTH IN THE HAYES PROJECT AREA. IT IS CERTAINLY STRONGLY FELT.

11. LUNCH PROGRAMS

AWARE OF THE HEALTH NEEDS OF THIS AREA, THE BOARD OF EDUCATION HAS MADE EVERY EFFORT TO EQUIP THESE SCHOOLS WITH CAFETERIAS. HERE A BALANCED MEAL, INCLUDING MEAT, TWO VEGETABLES, DESSERT, AND MILK, IS SERVED FOR 32 CENTS. HERE, TOO, THE EDUCATIONAL STAFF WHICH SUPERVISES THE LUNCH ROOM PLACES EMPHASIS ON TABLE MANNERS, CLEANLINESS, PROPER FOOD SELECTION, AND CONSIDERATION FOR OTHERS. TO ENCOURAGE PUPILS TO EAT THE BALANCED MEAL AT SCHOOL, WEST KINNEY HAS WHAT IS KNOWN AS A CLOSED LUNCH PERIOD--THAT IS, PUPILS MUST EAT IN SCHOOL. THOSE WHO CHOOSE MAY BRING THEIR OWN LUNCH AND PURCHASE MILK AND DESSERT. FOR INDIGENT PUPILS, A LUNCH PROGRAM IS PROVIDED.

12. OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM

SENSITIVE TO THE NEEDS OF THE DISINTERESTED AND SLOW PUPIL OF NORMAL INTELLIGENCE, THE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, DR. EDWARD F. KENNELLY, HAS RECENTLY RECOMMENDED TO THE BOARD OF EDUCATION THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM. THIS PROJECT WOULD ACCOMMODATE APPROXIMATELY 600 PUPILS BETWEEN 14 AND 18 WHO DID NOT RESPOND TO THE REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAM AND WHO COULD PROFIT FROM AN OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM GEARED TO THE NEEDS OF THE NEWARK BUSINESS AREA. THE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM WOULD BE DEVELOPED IN COOPERATION WITH INDUSTRY, LABOR, AND THE GENERAL PUBLIC. TRAINING WOULD BE OFFERED IN SPECIFIC AREAS SUCH AS FOOD TRADES, NEEDLE TRADES, CABINET WORK, COMMERCIAL SUBJECTS, HOMEMAKING, ELECTRONICS, AUTOMOTIVE REPAIRS, AND CONSTRUCTION SKILLS. HOWEVER, THERE WOULD STILL BE A BASIC PROGRAM SIMILAR TO THAT OF THE REGULAR SCHOOL TO FACILITATE LEARNING IN THE FUNDAMENTALS OF READING, WRITING, ARITHMETIC, AND THE BASICS OF GOOD CITIZENSHIP. ART AND MUSIC WOULD ALSO HAVE THEIR PLACES.

IN ADDITION EMPHASIS WOULD BE PLACED ON HOMEROOM ACTIVITIES, GUIDANCE FACILITIES, JOB PLACEMENT OF GRADUATES, AND PSYCHOLOGICAL AND REMEDIAL HELP. THE SUPERINTENDENT IS HOPEFUL THAT THIS TYPE OF PROGRAM WOULD REDUCE DROPOUTS, CURB HOSTILITY IN MANY FRUSTRATED, UNSUCCESSFUL YOUNGSTERS, AND CONTRIBUTE GENERALLY TO THE ADJUSTMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE.

13. STATE ASSISTANCE FOR EMOTIONALLY AND SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED CHILDREN

THE STATE LEGISLATURE MUST BE COMMENDED FOR THE RECENT ENACTMENT OF ASSEMBLY BILL 125. THIS LAW RECOGNIZES THE VALUE OF THE TEAM APPROACH IN WHICH TEACHERS, GUIDANCE PERSONNEL, PSYCHIATRISTS, PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND SOCIAL WORKERS WORK TOGETHER IN IDENTIFYING EMOTIONALLY AND/OR SOCIALLY MALADJUSTED PUPILS AND DEVELOPING A PROGRAM FOR THEM. THE COSTS OF THIS PROGRAM ARE TO BE SHARED BY THE STATE UP TO \$2.00 PER PUPIL OVER AND ABOVE EXISTING STATE AID. THIS TYPE OF ASSISTANCE IS BOUND TO HAVE A POWERFUL, POSITIVE EFFECT ON ADJUSTMENT OF YOUTH IN NEIGHBORHOODS SUCH AS THE HAYES PROJECT AREA.

A NEIGHBORHOOD PLAN OF ACTION

ONE OF THE IMPORTANT PRINCIPLES OF GROUP DYNAMICS IN ACHIEVING GROUP GOALS IS PARTICIPATION OF THE GROUP MEMBERS IN PLANNING AND EXECUTING A PROGRAM. IF THE HAYES PROJECT AREA IS EVER GOING TO MAKE STRIDES IN DEVELOPING IN ITS YOUTH WHOLESOME COMMUNITY VALUES AND GOOD CITIZENSHIP, IT MUST INVOLVE ITS ADULT MEMBERS IN THE EFFORT AND DEVELOP ITS OWN LEADERSHIP. AS A MATTER OF FACT, FROM A FINANCIAL POINT OF VIEW, THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF MONEY WHICH CAN BE POURED INTO A COMMUNITY IN THE FORM OF SERVICES AND AGENCY ASSISTANCE. AT SOME POINT THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP MUST TAKE OVER.

IT IS HERE SUGGESTED THAT ALL AGENCIES OF THE COMMUNITY POOL THEIR RESOURCES IN ONE COMMON PROJECT: THE ENLISTMENT AND TRAINING OF VOLUNTEER LEADERS FOR A CLUB RECREATION PROGRAM. INDIVIDUALS WHO GIVE EVIDENCE OF INTEREST AND LEADERSHIP QUALITIES SHOULD BE INVITED TO TAKE A SUSTAINED PERIOD OF TRAINING, PERHAPS FOR SEVERAL MONTHS, IN LEADING A YOUTH GROUP.

WITH THE HELP OF THE VARIOUS SOCIAL AGENCIES, THE SCHOOL AND PERHAPS ONE OF THE LOCAL COLLEGES, A SATISFACTORY COURSE OF INSTRUCTION COULD BE DEVELOPED. AT THE END OF THE TRAINING PERIOD, AN EFFORT WOULD BE MADE, PERHAPS UNDER THE LEADERSHIP OF A PROFESSIONAL FIELD WORKER, TO BRING SOME OF THE NON-SUPERVISED GROUPS FROM THE STREET INTO A SUPERVISED PROGRAM IN THE SCHOOL RECREATION CENTER WITH A VOLUNTEER LEADER AS AN ADVISOR. THE IDEA WOULD BE TO REACH THOSE YOUNG PEOPLE WHO ARE GENERALLY EXCLUDED FROM THESE CENTERS ON ACCOUNT OF BEHAVIOR OR WHO RESIST AFFILIATION WITH AN ORGANIZED AGENCY. THE ENTICING BRIBE TO JOIN COULD BE THE USE OF ONE OF THE FOUR GYMNASIUMS AT WEST KINNEY FOR ONE NIGHT A WEEK AND USE OF A CLASSROOM FOR A QUIET GAME OR A MEETING ON A SECOND NIGHT. ALL OF THIS WOULD, OF COURSE, BE PART OF THE SCHOOL RECREATION SET-UP UNDER THE IMMEDIATE SUPERVISION OF THE SCHOOL RECREATION DIRECTOR.

WITH THE HELP OF VOLUNTEERS WORKING UNDER SUPERVISION, THE CURRENT RECREATION PROGRAMS COULD BE EXPANDED TO INCLUDE MANY YOUNG PEOPLE NOW ON THE OUTSIDE. ONCE A GROUP IS UNDER SUPERVISION, THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION WITH THE LEADER AND IDENTIFICATION WITH HIS VALUES HAS BEGUN. IT THEN BECOMES POSSIBLE TO MODIFY THE ATTITUDES OF THE GROUP AND THE BEHAVIOR OF ITS MEMBERS.

IN ADDITION, THE VOLUNTEER LEADERS CAN BE INVOLVED IN THE PLANNING ACTIVITIES OF THE JOINT AGENCIES OF THE COMMUNITY TO PROMOTE OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD GOALS. IN BRIEF THE PLAN INCLUDES:

1. COOPERATION OF ALL COMMUNITY AGENCIES BY FORMING AN AGENCY COUNCIL.
2. SETTING UP A COURSE FOR LOCAL LEADERSHIP TRAINING OF VOLUNTEERS.
3. BRINGING NON-SUPERVISED YOUTH INTO A LOCAL RECREATION PROGRAM WITH VOLUNTEER CLUB LEADERSHIP.
4. DEVELOPING THE LEADERSHIP POTENTIAL OF THE VOLUNTEERS BY CLUB LEADERSHIP AND BY PARTICIPATION IN OTHER PROJECTS.
5. CHANGING GROUP VALUES FROM UNACCEPTABLE TO ACCEPTABLE ONES.

ONCE THE LOCAL LEADERSHIP IS DEVELOPED, THERE IS NO LIMIT TO WHICH THE JOINT AGENCY COUNCIL AND LOCAL LEADERSHIP CAN DIRECT THEIR ENERGIES. OTHER COMMUNITY PROJECTS MIGHT INCLUDE:

1. MOBILIZING LOCAL BUSINESSMEN IN A PROGRAM FOR PROVIDING AFTER-SCHOOL JOBS.
2. ENCOURAGING PARENTS TO PROVIDE CULTURAL ENRICHMENT FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

3. EDUCATING PARENTS IN HEALTH HABITS AND NUTRITION.
4. WORKING WITH THE SCHOOLS ON LOCAL CULTURAL ENRICHMENT PROJECTS--ART SHOW, SCIENCE SHOW, DANCE FESTIVAL, DRAMATIC PRODUCTION, ETC.

SUMMARY

I BELIEVE THAT YOUTH CAN BE HELPED TO DEVELOP GOOD CITIZENSHIP AND ACQUIRE SOCIALLY APPROVED BEHAVIOR PATTERNS IN A NEIGHBORHOOD LIKE THE HAYES PROJECT AREA IF WE FOLLOW SOME OF THE SUGGESTIONS MENTIONED TODAY. THE MOST IMPORTANT ARE THESE:

1. INVOLVE LOCAL COMMUNITY LAY LEADERSHIP IN PLANNING AND EXECUTING PROGRAMS TO SATISFY THE NEEDS OF YOUTH. START WITH CLUB LEADERSHIP.
2. HELP EVERY YOUTH TO LEARN TO READ. THIS ONE ACT MAY HELP TO REMOVE FRUSTRATIONS AND PROVIDE CONFIDENCE THROUGH THE SUCCESSFUL MASTERY OF A DESIRED SKILL.
3. PROVIDE IN SCHOOLS A RICH FLEXIBLE PROGRAM OF LEARNING ON MANY LEVELS TO INSPIRE INTEREST IN AND MEET THE NEEDS OF ALL CHILDREN.
4. MAKE SURE THAT THERE IS ADEQUATE OPPORTUNITY FOR BOYS AND GIRLS TO ENJOY WHOLESOME RECREATION TOGETHER, PARTICULARLY SOCIAL DANCING UNDER COMPETENT SUPERVISION.
5. BRING INTO THE SUPERVISED PROGRAM FACILITIES OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD THE GROUPS OF YOUTH WHO CONVENE IN LOCAL HANGOUTS AND RESIST SUPERVISION.
6. SATISFY THE DESIRE OF YOUTHS FOR AFTER-SCHOOL JOBS.
7. INCREASE LOCAL PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT FACILITIES, PREFERABLY BY ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SUGGESTED NEWARK-IRVINGTON YOUTH CLINIC.
8. TRAIN TEACHERS CAREFULLY IN GROUP DYNAMICS AND MENTAL HYGIENE TECHNIQUES. SCHOOLS SHOULD HAVE IN-SERVICE PROGRAMS TO HELP TEACHERS, PARTICULARLY THE NEW ONES, APPLY MENTAL HEALTH PRINCIPLES IN THE CLASSROOM AND TO IMPROVE THEIR TECHNIQUES OF INSTRUCTION.
9. WHEREVER YOUTH CONGREGATE IN SCHOOLS, AGENCIES, OR RECREATION CENTERS, ESTABLISH FIRM, FAIR, AND CONSISTENT STANDARDS OF BEHAVIOR AND ENFORCE COMPLIANCE WITH THESE STANDARDS.
10. ESTABLISH AN OCCUPATIONAL PROGRAM, AS RECENTLY RECOMMENDED BY DR. EDWARD F. KENNELLY, SUPERINTENDENT, FOR

PUPILS WHO CANNOT FIT INTO THE REGULAR SCHOOL PROGRAM
BECAUSE OF DISINTEREST, POOR VERBAL COMMUNICATION, OR
INABILITY.

I WISH TO THANK THE COMMISSION FOR THE OPPORTUNITY TO
PRESENT MY VIEWS AT THIS HEARING. I SHALL BE HAPPY TO ANSWER QUESTIONS
OR ELABORATE ON ANY INFORMATION PRESENTED.